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Women of Valor

Partisans and Resistance Fighters

Aida Brydbord

Oral History

When World War II began, the Soviet Union occupied the town of Pruzhany, Poland, where Aida Brydbord (Chaja Czerczewska) was born and raised. The Russians confiscated her father's small grocery store, and the family subsisted on their savings and on the proceeds of clandestine sales. Aida was the youngest, the only one of six children still living at home in this religious family. With the German occupation, the Czerczewska family was living in Linovo, a small town near Pruzhany. Two sisters were living in Palestine, two in the U.S.; another, Esther, was married and living with the family in Linovo.

Aida became a teacher of Russian in a village school near Pruzhany. The Jews in Pruzhany were fairly isolated from the growing cataclysm engulfing European Jewry. Radios were scarce, newspapers reflected the political agenda of the occupying power, and although Jewish refugees who passed through the town told frightening stories of their experiences with Nazism, they did not influence the opinions of Pruzhany's traditional Jews. Aida remembers her father describing his impression of the Germans as "the same Germans (as in) the first World War."

Aida Paul Brydbord daughter Ruth (Riva) 1948 Berlin.

During the first few days they didn't mistreat us too badly. They called us to the marketplace and they announced that the Jews are the biggest enemies of the people and that the Gentile people should have nothing to do with us. Within a week or two they said that all the Jews are supposed to wear round yellow circles on the front left side and in the back of their clothes.

One day they called my father in. My father was a very educated man. They asked him to be the head of the *Judenrat** in Linovo.[1] He didn't want to. He said that he is too old and that he wouldn't be able to send another Jew to do whatever they'll demand of him. After this, my parents decided to move to Pruzhany, and lived in the ghetto there. In Pruzhany, Mr. Janowicz[2], who knew German very well, was chosen to be president of the *Judenrat**. He was a Zionist and a wealthy man. Another man, Siegel[3], had lived in Danzig. He came to visit his parents in Pruzhany and was stranded there when the war broke out. He was the spokesman to the Germans because he knew German very well. Rabbi Mandelbaum was not an official member of the *Judenrat**. He was very smart, very intelligent. His word was taken into consideration when any decisions had to be made. Dr. Goldfein, a woman doctor[4], was also on the *Judenrat**. She was responsible for medical services. Her husband was also a member of the *Judenrat**.

The ghetto was formed three or four weeks later. The *Judenrat** had to carry out German orders: to see that people are going to work when they are called, to dig ditches, to go to a farm to dig potatoes, to clean the streets. There was barbed wire all around the ghetto,with a gate. We could go in or out only when a policeman was standing there checking us. We were counted when we walked in or out. When we walked in we were searched. There were two Jewish and one German policeman, or a Polish policeman appointed by the Germans.

I did all kinds of work, cleaning toilets, washing floors, cooking for the Germans, milking cows, chopping wood, going to the farmer to dig potatoes and working in a hospital. People my age tried to work outside the ghetto because the farmer sometimes let you have something. We tried to sneak in a potato or maybe a handful of greens or a little bit of butter or something like that. We didn't get paid by the *Judenrat** because the *Judenrat** didn't get paid by the Germans. The food in the ghetto was very poor quality. There was a lot of sickness. TB was a constant killer.

I remember working in the hospital in the ghetto.[5] It was originally a Polish *Gymnasium**. The doctor in charge was Dr. Goldfein. The head of the laboratory was Dr. Avram Treger. He taught me how to use the microscope and to detect TB and other diseases. A lot of people died of TB because conditions were very poor. You have to understand that in one small room, seven or eight people lived. There weren't enough beds. Bathrooms were outside. Sanitary conditions were absolutely terrible.[6]

I had a niece. She was five or six years old. Do you know what children played in that environment? They played "Germans", *Farbalten zach**, hiding from the Germans. The Germans are coming. Where shall we hide? Where shall we run away? That's what children played.

The *shul** also moved into the ghetto. Rabbi Mandelbaum was the head of the *shul**. People went to *daven**. The religious Jews went every morning and every evening. Everybody tried to observe Jewish holidays any way they could.

The Germans gave us some food. You had to stand in line to have your little bit of milk, some flour and whatever you could try to get. We exchanged things with the natives through the wires as long as the Germans weren't watching us. You gave them a blouse, or you gave them a dress and they gave you some butter or a chicken. There was a *shohet** (ritual slaughterer) in the ghetto, so you could kill a chicken and have some meat. As a matter of fact, once, in the middle of the night, they smuggled a cow into the ghetto. My house was on the edge of the ghetto near the wire. They put regular shoes on the cow to disguise its footprints. The *shohet** slaughtered the cow in the middle of the night. We already had customers and everybody was begging for a little bit of meat. By the next morning there was no sign that the cow had been in the ghetto.

In the ghetto the situation changed slowly. People were brought to Pruzhany from all the small villages, and even from bigger towns. More and more they asked the *Judenrat** to send people to outside work, to *Arbeitslagers**, from which they didn't return. Sometimes people volunteered for the *Arbeitslager** because conditions in the ghetto were so bad. They didn't have where to sleep. They had to sleep on the floor. I was living with my parents and my aunt and my uncle, five in a tiny little room. We had two beds and a sofa and a little stove. This room was our bedroom, our bathroom, our toilet, our eating room, everything.

We heard that ghettos were being liquidated. In the summer of '42 a group of people from ghetto Pruzhany went out to work at Linovo, 12 kilometers away. They told us that the Jews of Linovo were taken and killed.[7] Among them were my sister Esther and her family. The Germans pretended that they were taking everybody to work but they took them to a special place and they killed them. The Germans promised Mr. Siegal of our *Judenrat** that our ghetto is very valuable to them because Pruzhany is on a strategic line between Warsaw, Baranovichi, and Moscow. But it looked like our safety wouldn't last too long.

In 1942, two partisans came into the ghetto. One was a Jew, Josef Friedman; one was a Christian. Josef Friedman was originally from Bereza Kartuska. They came to talk to a group of young people in our ghetto who had already tried to organize a group. We didn't know about the partisans but there were people who were willing to escape the ghetto. They tried to bring in pieces of rifles, pieces of shells, bits of ammunition, and slowly assemble them for a future date, to escape from the ghetto. News was travelling very quickly that the Germans will finally liquidate the ghetto and kill us. Those people came to talk to the group and they gave us advice and they told us where to go in case we want to escape.[8] I heard about this from my boyfriend. He told me: "Two partisans came and I want to go away. My younger brother is also going." My mother was crying so much about our leaving that I felt I had to stay. The reaction of the *Judenrat** was terrible. They said, "You will ruin us! The minute

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the Germans know that a group of people went to the partisans, there will be absolute disaster!"[9] My boyfriend's brother, Tuvia, was fifteen years old. He went with the first seven boys to the partisans. They took ammunition and food and they left.

My boyfriend, Paul, was coming to visit me and he was talking to me. You know how young people are, always secretive. No one else knew anything about what was going on. We were whispering because everybody lived in one room. Paul's friend asked me one night, "Why do you let Paul get mixed up with all those people? Why are you in it? See to it that he should withdraw from the group and not have anything to do with them." There was a second group which formed to run away from the ghetto. It was boys and a very few girls, mostly young people. But in this particular group there were a few elderly men. We took them because they knew the surrounding area. We didn't have any leader. Every night Paul was assembling ammunition in the cellar. Because he and others smuggled it in, he was a valuable part of the group. He told them, "I want my girlfriend to come with me."

We got married on our last day in the ghetto, January 27, 1943. We had to register with the *Judenrat** so they should know that we are a couple. We got a piece of paper. There was a rabbi from a *shtibel** for *Huppah-Kiddushin**. There was no meal, no wine, nothing. Just to *shtell** the *Huppah** and *mazel tov** and that's all. I had a small ring. We didn't have any gold rings any more because in the ghetto the Germans took every piece of gold away from us. Everybody had to give their gold away. How do you make sure that people are being honest and bringing all their gold? You make a room dark. You put out a *Sefer Torah** and light two candles. The head of each family has to go in to this room and swear that he or she gave away everything that they had. Some religious men were there to see to it. I think my father was even there. The head of the family, the father or the mother, said, *"Dos vos ikh hob und dos gib ikh eikh aveck."* (this is what I have and this is what I give you). Everything was done spontaneously, without any reason or rationalization if it's wrong or right. Things were done on impulse.

Within a week, we had to run away. It was the last days of January 1943. The Germans surrounded the ghetto and they said tomorrow everybody has to be ready with a little package. We are going to the railroad station, 12 kilometers away. They said they would take us on sleds and bring us to the railroad station.[10] That's when our group decided to escape. I went to the house where I lived with my parents. I told my parents I didn't want to leave them because I am the young one and I could supply them with food and everything. "I don't want to leave you!" My father said to me, "You are running away. You are not coming with us on the sleds. You will be the one who will survive and tell your sisters in the United States how we suffered." I said, "But I want to go with you." "No," he said, "You are not coming." Those were his last words to me.

I ran away from the house and I saw the Germans at the beginning of the street coming to the house to pick them up. I ran away to another street. Meanwhile, Paul sent out a man to look for me. He took me to the hiding place where there was a bunker. We hid in this bunker for the day. At night we went out; the streets were empty. My parents went on the transport and they were taken to

My husband Paul and I, and the group of twelve people ran to th forest. At first we didn't make contact with anybody. The first gr that left was supposed to be in touch with us. If they heard that something happened in the ghetto, they were supposed to be on road to meet us. A day went by and nobody met us. We didn't kn what to do. We sat under the trees and we asked ourselves, "Wh shall we do? Which way should we turn? We don't know where t go." Then, most of the group left us. Paul and I remained, and another girl and boy remained. The girl from the other couple sa to me, "I had a maid. She worked in our house a long time. I kn where she lives. I'll go there." But she never reached that place because the Germans caught her. The rest of the group came ba at night and they said, "Oh, we didn't leave you. We just went to look for a place where we can settle."They were jealous that we were couples. The next day we met more people from the ghetto and the next night more people came and we were around sixty seventy people. We decided to divide ourselves into smaller gro but not to separate too far from each other.

We lived like this for a few days. But we were hungry. We had nothing to eat. We didn't take any utensils with us. We found a little container in the woods for warming up a little bit of snow t get water. The older people knew the surrounding areas. They s "We will go out to the village and we'll bring some food." Six or seven men took the four or five rifles, and they went to the villa Morning came and they returned with a couple of sleds of food. We were very happy. The people who went to bring the food wer rest and the people who stayed behind started to unload the foo But the people in the villages got mad at us for grabbing all the food. They immediately went to the Germans and squealed on u and right away the Germans were on our tracks. They brought th Germans straight to our camp. There we were, unloading the fo and we heard shooting from all over. Like animals we started to not knowing what happened but knowing that we were in danger I was running; I didn't know where Paul was, he didn't know wh I was. As I was running, I met him. As we ran we grabbed some bread. I said, "If I have to die, let me not be hungry, because my stomach is so empty." We ran all day long. The Germans were a us, shooting constantly. By night, everything quieted down and animals we started to crawl out of the hiding places, wherever w were. We lost twelve people, including my husband's older brot Avrum. He was then twenty-one.

We still didn't meet any partisans. The partisans didn't know anything about us. We were afraid the Germans would return th next day. Now we divided up into small groups and each went ir different direction. We took what food we had because we knew that we cannot depend on anybody. We were afraid to show our in any village. We walked all night and we came to a place that was just swamps and woods and settled down there for the night In the morning, we saw that we were not near any villages, so w decided to stay there. We started to dig holes to live in. You dig hole and you cut tree branches and you camouflage the hole wit leaves. It was winter; it was February and I didn't have any sho I wrapped my feet with *shmates**. Whatever food we had with us ate but after a couple of days we were hungry. I don't have to tel you what the sanitary conditions were. We were full of lice. The were eating us alive. Our bodies were bloody from our scratchin

One day we saw, from afar, something like a mountain. That's the way the peasants protected their food for the winter. They didn't have any cellars, no refrigeration. The climate is cold, so they piled up potatoes and carrots and beets and covered them with straw and with dirt and used the food as they needed it. At night we went over there, dug up the potatoes, covered it up again and came back to our little *ziemlanka**. We found a pail and we were cooking the potatoes. We had no salt; we just washed one off a little bit in the snow and we cooked it. One potato was shared by the whole group, two women and ten men. The peels were eaten, everything. Nothing was thrown away. Everything was full of sand. You just ate the potatoes without salt, bread, nothing with it. Everybody was having heartburn constantly.

We lived like this for a couple of weeks. Always cold and hungry. We saw light from afar but we were afraid to go closer. One day one of our fellows looked around the surrounding area, came back and said: "There is only one house in the vicinity. Maybe we should take a chance and go in and talk to them. First of all we want some kind of news of what's going on in the world. Also, we can get something to eat." This is what happened. Two of our fellows went out. They made up a story that they got lost but the woman said to them: "We know who you are. You are not lost. We know that a group from the Pruzhany ghetto ran away and they are hiding some place near here. I don't care. What do you want?" They told her that they were hungry. The man told them, "I'll give you something to eat but you have to be very careful. I cannot show you the way out of here because the Germans are coming here constantly."

From this day on, this Russian peasant was our contact. To us he was a lifesaver. He provided food for us. He gave us all the news. He didn't take any money from us; we didn't have any. I remember I gave him my coat. It was a maroon coat with a black collar. I paid him for the bread with it. Whatever article of value somebody had they gave to him for bread. We lived like that all winter. Spring started to come. The sun was out. A partisan never takes off all his clothes, only one piece at a time, which you smoke out over the fire till all those insects are dead and then you put it back on. You couldn't dig a hole by the water and wash yourself. We smelled terribly. At night we never all slept at once. Two or three people were always on watch, to know and see what's going on. One night the watchman alarmed everybody. What was it? Partisans, the real partisans! Russians, organized partisans, were walking in our direction. It was a group of about four or five people. One of them was Paul's younger brother, Tuvia. They got news that a group of people ran away from Pruzhany ghetto and is hiding. Tuvia made sure that his group will go through the woods looking for us. He didn't know exactly who it would be, but he knew that a group of Pruzhaner Jews are in the woods. Tuvia's name was now Anatole, a Russian name. He wore a uniform, and with a machine gun he was going on a mission. He said he'd be back this way. That's how it happened. On their way back, they took us to the partisan *Otrad**.

It was the Kirowsky *Otrad**. Our commander was Juzef Samulik. The group was composed of about 500 people: non-Jews, Jews, runaways from the army, officers and soldiers, Russian soldiers. They were mostly men, but some women too. All the "houses" were *ziemlankas** underground. As long as it was quiet, the Germans didn't attack us; we lived like this in a little "town." We went to villages and took food. If they betrayed us, the next day the whole village was on fire. In this particular *Otrad** there were 30 Jews. We were treated nicely but with sarcasm: "A Jew is not a fighter." The Russians called us "Abrashas". "Abrasha" means a Jew, from the name, Abraham. But the truth was that the Jews were very loyal and brave fighters in the partisans.

I had a gun and I had a rifle. I knew how to take them apart and put them together. I was cooking for the group which was going out on military missions. Another group was going out to bring food. Another group was sewing and repairing the uniforms. If we stayed long enough in one place, we gathered stones and built a little house with an oven, heated up the stones, threw water on them, like a *shvitz** bath. We wore pants and boots. Boots were the most important. You got your boots where you got your food, in the villages. We went for what we called a "*bombioshka*"*. You "bummed" whatever you could. One night I went out with a group of other partisans. I climbed up to an attic of a house, probably owned by a rich man. I threw down boots and overcoats and fur coats from the attic for the other people to take. That's when everybody got dressed so nicely in boots and coats.

We had a radio for transmitting and we had a printing press where we printed newsflashes. We had a Jewish doctor, Dr. Smolinsky, who also ran away from the ghetto. One day a group of five men and I went to dynamite a bridge. As soon as we started out the Germans began to shoot at us. We hid in the woods but the mission wasn't a loss. The bridge was destroyed, and they couldn't find us even though the dogs were after us, because once you come to water they lose your track.

After this incident Dr. Smolinsky said to me: "I need a nurse to help me. You will be my assistant instead of going on this kind of mission." After that I was working in the dispensary. I rode a horse to check if the dispensary was in a secure hiding place. This dispensary was for the very badly wounded. Nobody in the partisans was sick with ordinary illness. The doctor amputated legs and arms with an ordinary saw. In the middle of the night, I would go there to look at how they were, to cook something for them, change their dressings, make them comfortable. Then I would come back to the camp and talk over the problems with the doctor. He would give me the medications which we got through our connections with Moscow. The Communists trusted the Jewish partisans. When airplanes flew in from Moscow with parachute-drops of medication or very important news, Jewish partisans went to pick it up.

There was an epidemic of typhus once in the partisan camp, and, as soon as I got everybody well, I got sick. But nobody died from illness, in spite of the conditions. A few wounded died. We had a cemetery. We had even a clubhouse. After the missions were done, we went to the clubhouse; we read, the Russian *garmoshka** was played, and we danced.

We Jews knew when the Jewish holidays were, but we didn't have any means of observing them. We knew when *Pesah** was. Nobody ate bread on *Pesah**. We knew that we had to be very careful with the Russians. There were partisans who were killed because they were accused of being spies. It was very cruel; they were shot. In our group, every Jewish partisan was well treated, respected because we never said "no" to a mission, no matter how big, how small, how dangerous. We were always saved for the most dangerous missions. For sleeping on the guard post, the punishment was death. That was the law of the camp. Because you were asleep, the whole camp could be killed. One day, a young Jewish boy either fell asleep or they told him that he was asleep. We started to beg them, "So few of us are alive. He's just a young boy. Nothing happened to the *Otrad**. Please let him live!" And they did.

Once my husband was sent out on a big mission. In the back of someone's mind was the hope that he wouldn't return. One of the officers was making a pass at me. A guy with whom I was working came to me and said, "Tonight, don't sleep in your regular place. Go to where all the girls are sleeping." I didn't, so he got mad at me and he sent me to the Kirowsky Family *Otrad**, where they had a special place for families with children. I was working there as a nurse with the doctor's permission. There were sick children, sick people. The Russians were afraid to harm me because I had a husband and my brother-in-law, Tuvia, was a very influential person in the *Otrad**. He got a lot of medals. The Germans offered a big reward for him, dead or alive. They knew who he was because he was coming in the middle of the day, shooting at them in public places, like at the airport, where Germans were sitting at their posts. He killed them without any warning.

We lived like this till the end of the summer of '44. The day when we were liberated there was a very big fight. I was alone with our part of the *Otrad**, without my husband or brother-in-law. A lot of boys went out on a mission and they didn't return. News came to me that Paul was killed. His brother came back from a mission. Immediately, he asked me, "Where is Feivel (Paul)?" I said, "Paul is not here. They told us that he probably got killed." But soon he returned with the group. After the liberation in 1945 our child was born, in Pruzhany. Then things got very hot for us. My brother-in-law Tuvia got arrested by the Russians and was sentenced to death. He was accused as a spy, even though he was so highly decorated. His parents were rich; this was "evidence." They found a Polish book in his possession. This was "evidence." It was enough to arrest him, and he got a death sentence. By the time we found out about him his sentence was changed to a lifeterm in Siberia. When he walked out of the courthouse, an officer was sitting at the desk and asked him, "What is your last wish?" Tuvia said, "I don't really have any last wishes but one thing I would like. I have very valuable medals: Stalin's medal and the Red Cross medal. I would like them sent to my hometown." The officer said, "I don't see that you are such a spy, such an enemy of our country. Sign this paper." Instead of death, he sent him to Siberia. When we heard about it,

we started to search for him. We hired a lawyer from Moscow and he said to us, "Are you crazy? Your brother was sentenced for spying; he is in Siberia. Your sister from the United States sent you papers to come to the United States. With this combination of events, you'll be on the list for Siberia too." Then he told us that we had better do something for ourselves. We forged documents and a friend of ours gave us his truck to take us to the railroad station to get out of Russia.

The Brydbord family reached Lodz, Poland, and then smuggled across the border to Berlin. After a series of mishaps, including the arrest of their baby daughter, they finally reached the American Zone of occupation, where they had to go through two more marriage ceremonies in order to obtain the proper documents for immigration to the United States. Paul's brother was eventually liberated from Siberia and immigrated to Israel.

Interviewed by:
Collette Krause 2/28/86 and Rachel Licht 10/9/86

Jewish Partisans in Vilna after its liberation, 1944. The women standing in the top row are (R-L) Vitka Kovner, Rozka Korczak, and Bluma Markowicz, who was killed in a bombardment a few days after the photo was taken.

Photo reprinted from: ***Ruzka Korchak-Marle: The Personality and Philosophy of Life of a Fighter,*** *edited by 'ehuda Tobin, et. al., Israel: Moreshet, 1988*

Footnotes

1. A *Judenrat** (Jewish Council) was formed in Pruzhany in mid-July, 1941, consisting eventually of 24 members. (**Pinkas Pruzhany**, Tel Aviv, 1983, p.92).

2. Yitzhak Janowicz was head of the Pruzhany Judenrat. **Pinkas Pruzhany**, p.339.

3. Zavel Siegel is mentioned in **Pinkas Pruzhany**, p. 378 as a spokesman.

4. Dr. Olia (Olga) Goldfein, born in Pruzhany in 1889, received her medical training in Geneva in 1913, after being excluded from Russian medical schools by the *numerous clausus* (quota). She served in a Moscow hospital during World War I and then returned to Pruzhany, where she established a flourishing medical practice among Jews and Christians. Under Russian occupation in World War II she was appointed director of the city hospital. She and her husband were on the first transport to Auschwitz from Pruzhany. She escaped from the train at Linovo, nearby, and made her way back to Pruzhany in spite of a head wound caused by a German rifle butt. Dr. Goldfein sought refuge in the convent at Pruzhany and was warmly received by Sister Dolorosa, whom she had once cured of a serious illness. The Mother Superior, however, ordered her to leave the convent.

Dressed as a nun, accompanied by Sister Dolorosa, Dr. Goldfein reached Sister Dolorosa's home in a faraway village, where she worked as a nurse for the duration of the war. After liberation by the Red Army the women returned to Pruzhany, where Sister Dolorosa was expelled from the convent. They then went to Lodz, where Sister Dolorosa settled. Dr. Goldfein became a medical officer in Marshall Zhukhov's army. After the war she was reunited with her daughter in France, and eventually settled in Israel where she worked as a doctor for *Kupat Holim**. She died in 1964. Sister Dolorosa was honored by Yad Vashem as a Righteous Gentile. (**Pinkas Pruzhany**, pp 59-62, and Ehrenburg, Ilya and Vasily Grossman, **The Black Book**, N.Y.: Holocaust Library, 1981, pp.206-212).

5. See Trunk, Isaiah, **Judenrat,** NY, Macmillan, 1972, p.170 for a description of this hospital: "A group of dedicated doctors and nurses worked miracles..."

6. In the Pruzhany ghetto the population density reached unusual proportions, with 2 square meters per person, after 4500 Jews from Bialystok were forced to move in. Trunk, **Judenrat,** p.126.

7. This massacre is described in **Pinkas Pruzhany**, pp 151-153. It took place at the end of July, 1942.

8. Trunk, **Judenrat,** p.465-466.

9. Trunk, **Judenrat,** p.462.

10. **Pinkas Pruzhany** p.380. They were going to the railroad station at Linovo.

Glossary

Abfall [German] waste, eg. shavings

Aktion [German] round-up

Aliya [Hebrew] ascending, emigration to Israel

Arbeiterin [German] worker (f)

Arbeitslager(s) [German] labor camp

Aufseherin [German] work supervisor (f)

"Babsky" [Slavic, Coll./ Yiddish] A "Babba," grandmother's remedy

Blokhova(s) [c.c. language] female supervisor of a block of barracks

Blockälteste(r) [German] prisoner in charge of a barrack

Boit'l [Yiddish] a small sack or packet

Bombioshka [Yiddish/ Russian coll.] lit. air raid, in this case, a partisan attack

Briha [Hebrew] A Zionist movement devoted to illegal immigration to the land of Israel

Daven [Yiddish] to pray

Effektenlager [German] warehouses where confiscated clothing and personal possessions of prisoners were sorted

Einsatzgruppen [German] "Special action" Nazi military groups, referring to mobile killing units

Einsatzkommando [German] "Special action" commando, referring to Nazi mobile killing squad

Farbalten zach [Yiddish] hidden thing

Faltung [German] folded; convoluted

Finifi'l (ach) [Yiddish] groups of five

Forarbeiterin [German] work foreman (f.)

Führer [German] leader, usually referring to Adolf Hitler

Garmoshka [Russian] accordion

Generalgouvernement [German] General Government, referring to areas of Poland that were occupied by Germany but not incorporated into the Reich; an administrative unit headed by Hans Frank.

Gimatria [Hebrew] Hebrew numerology. Each letter of the Hebrew alphabet has a numerical value.

Gwardia Ludowa [Polish] People's Guard

Gymnasium [German] In Germany & other European countries, an academic secondary school, preparatory for University.

Halakha [Hebrew] Jewish law, incorporating the oral and written traditions.

Hevra Kaddisha [Hebrew] Jewish burial society

Huppa-Kiddushin [Hebrew] marriage canopy and ceremony

Judenrat(e) [German] Jewish Council, responsible for conducting the affairs of the community and fulfilling German orders

Kapo [German] prisoner-trusty in concentration camp

Kibbutz [Hebrew] collective farm

Kupat Holim [Hebrew] the Israeli National Health Service

Lager [German] camp

Lagerführer [German] camp leader

Laufer (in) [German] runner, courier in a ghetto or camp

Mazel Tov [Hebrew] good luck, a blessing used on happy occasions or as a toast

Meister [German] foreman

Menschlikh [Yiddish] humane

Meshalim [Hebrew] parables

Mikveh [Hebrew] ritual bath

Nekama [Hebrew] revenge

Oblava(s) [Polish] search for partisans

Otrad [Russian] partisan unit, military unit

Palmah [Hebrew] acronym for *Plugot Mahatz*, strike force of the *Hagana*, the underground army of the Jewish community in Palestine prior to Israeli statehood.

Passierschein [German] safe-conduct pass

Pesah [Hebrew] Passover

Pulverraum [German] gunpowder room

Rebbetzin [Yiddish] Rabbi's wife

Revier [French/German] sick-bay, infirmary

Schein(en) [German] official permit, pass, certificate

Schron [Polish] hiding space

Sefer Torah [Hebrew] holy scrolls of the five Books of Moses, on parchment

Sh'hita [Hebrew/Yiddish] slaughter, massacre

Shmates [Yiddish] rags

Shochet [Hebrew/Yiddish] ritual slaughterer

Shtel [Yiddish] to set up

Shtibel [Yiddish] small synagogue

Shtetl (ekh) [Yiddish] small town (s)

Shul [Yiddish] synagogue

Shtubhova [c.c. language] female inmate in charge of a section of barrack

Shvitz [Yiddish] steam bath, lit. to sweat

Sonderkommando [German] Special work squad, usually workers in the crematoria

Tisha B'Av [Hebrew] the ninth day of the month of Av, a fast day to commemorate the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem

Verzögerung [German] delayed action fuse for a rocket or bomb

Wehrmacht [German] German Army

Yahrzeit [Yiddish] anniversary of a death

Zahlappell [German] roll-call in concentration camp

Z'khut [Hebrew] merit

Ziemlanka(s) [Russian] camouflaged, underground dug-out living space, in forests, used by partisans